

23 September 2008

## CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

**Beijing Olympic Games**  
**Beijing Paralympic Games**  
**Mr Peter Leek**

**Mr BRADBURY (Lindsay) (4.03 p.m.)** — I rise to acknowledge the contribution of a number of men and women from my electorate who participated in the recent Beijing Olympic Games and Beijing Paralympic Games. I am very proud, as are all members of my local community, of the impressive list of athletes from my electorate who represented Australia at the games in a very broad range of sports. In my electorate, sporting fields are packed with children and adults every weekend, participating in team and individual sports. Penrith is blessed with a wealth of athletic talent from our local school and club teams right through to our professional sportsmen and sportswomen.

Sport is a crucible of personal development. It is a great battleground upon which we can compete against others, ourselves and the elements. It is a place where we test our strength, our speed and our agility. But in sport we also test our integrity, our passion, our fortitude and our commitment. Sport can be a microcosm of life. It can distil the broader challenges we face in our lives into a 90-minute game, a three-round bout or a 10-second sprint. Our Olympic and Paralympic athletes have risen to the pinnacle of their sports through talent, determination and sacrifice. They are held in high esteem in our community, and for good reason. They have demonstrated a strength of character to which we can all aspire.

I would like to acknowledge and congratulate all of the Olympians and Paralympians who hail from my local community who took part in the Beijing games last month: Melissa Wu, who achieved silver in diving; Janelle Shepherd, judo; Mark Bellofiore and Lachlan Milne for the canoe slalom C2; Jacqui Lawrence, who won a silver in kayaking; Torsten Lachmann, canoeing; Matt Neilsen, basketball; Luke Madill, BMX racing; Lexie Feeney, archery; Kerry Wyborn, with a bronze in the softball; Luke Boyd, boxing; and Mark Bridge in soccer. I also acknowledge and congratulate our Paralympians: Peter Leek, who I will speak about in a moment; and John McLean and Kathryn Ross in the double sculls rowing, who received a silver.

Unfortunately time does not allow me to expand on the achievements of each of these individuals, but I would like to reserve a special mention for 19-year-old Paralympian Peter Leek. Peter was arguably one of our most outstanding athletes in the Olympics and Paralympics in 2008. He took home eight medals, including three gold, four silver and one bronze. A resident of St Mary's and a student at Colyton High School, Peter competed in freestyle, butterfly and his pet event, the 100-metre backstroke, and he did not disappoint any of his fans. Peter was born with cerebral palsy and took up swimming at the age of eight to help with his disability. Now, as a world-class athlete, he trains six days a week and his efforts have paid off in spades. On behalf of my electorate and the Australian people, I would like to say congratulations to Peter. He was an excellent ambassador for his sport, our local community and his country. Well done to Peter and all the Olympians and Paralympians from my electorate.